



## ***AOT in Action***

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

### **A Message from Director Sherry Henry:**

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Good morning,

Thank you to everyone who attended our first complimentary ATU workshop, "[Advocacy: A Necessary Skill in Challenging Times](#)." We received some great feedback and are pleased to know that many of you gained a better understanding of advocacy through the sessions and took that information back to your communities. I also want to thank our speaker Barry Aarons for the highly informative presentation. For those of you who could not join us for these workshops, the presentation is now available on our Web site, [www.AZOT.gov](http://www.AZOT.gov).

We're also hearing some great comments about our current ATU workshop series, "Grant Seeking and Grant Writing for Tourism-Related Projects." December 15<sup>th</sup> is your last chance to participate in this session, which will be held in Mesa. Don't miss this opportunity to learn how to navigate the grant finding and grant writing process! For more information, please read the **AOT News** section below.

On a celebratory note: Congratulations to Tom's Tavern in Phoenix for celebrating its 80<sup>th</sup> birthday! For more information, visit [www.tomstavernphoenix.com](http://www.tomstavernphoenix.com).

Have a great week.

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### **AOT News**

#### **Last Chance for ATU Workshop – "Grant Seeking and Grant Writing for Tourism-Related Projects"**

As the result of a valuable partnership between the Arizona Department of Commerce, Arizona State Parks, and Arizona Office of Tourism, we are proud to present the next Arizona Tourism

University complimentary workshop, "Grant Seeking and Grant Writing for Tourism-Related Projects."

This informative session will uncover the best free and subscription-based grant funding directories for finding critically needed monies to fund your tourism-related projects, in part or full. The trainer, Dr. Bev Browning, author of *Grant Writing for Dummies* and *Perfect Phrases for Writing Grant Proposals*, will lead you through the skills of finding the perfect group of potential funders and show you how to write grant award winning narrative sections. Don't miss the best "how to" session of the year!

Following Dr. Browning's presentation, Eric Vondy from the State Historic Preservation Office, Vivian Strang also from the State Historic Preservation Office, Tom Doyle from the Arizona Department of Commerce, and Glenn Schlottman from the Arizona Office of Tourism will present information on Certified Local Governments, Historic Preservation, the Main Street and REDI Programs, and AOT grant programs. Each presenter will be available at the last part of the workshop to answer questions and discuss projects.

Be sure to sign up today! Contact Glenn Schlottman at 602-364-3727 or via e-mail at [gschlottman@azot.gov](mailto:gschlottman@azot.gov).

"Grant Seeking and Grant Writing for Tourism-Related Projects" complimentary workshops will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the following locations:

**December 15**

[Arizona Museum of Natural History](#)

53 N MacDonald  
Mesa, AZ 85201

For more information or to registrar, contact Glenn Schlottman at 602-364-3727 or via e-mail at [gschlottman@azot.gov](mailto:gschlottman@azot.gov).

**Brochure Distribution Program**

The Arizona Office of Tourism collaborates with the Arizona Hotel & Lodging Association to distribute hotel and lodging brochures at Arizona Welcome Centers. The program is designed to enhance the visibility for lodging properties. Properties wishing to participate in this program must contact the Arizona Hotel and Lodging Association at 602-604-0729. For further details, contact Brian Lang, AOT's Visitors Services Manager, at 602-364-3694 or via e-mail at [blang@azot.gov](mailto:blang@azot.gov).

**AMC Tourism Committee Plenary Session**

The Tourism committee of the Arizona-Mexico Commission (AMC) met in Hermosillo, Sonora on Dec. 4th. Sonora's newly elected Governor Guillermo Padres-Elias appointed a new Deputy Director of Tourism and AOT looks forward to working with our new partners on bi-national tourism projects that enhance the Arizona-Sonora border region. The Tourism committee will continue to work on the expansions of the Lukeville and Sonoyta Ports of Entry and enhance our bi-national working partnership between the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument and the Pinacate Biosphere Reserve and develop new ones. We thank Governor Jan Brewer and

Governor Padres-Elias for their support of the AMC and the Tourism committee. The next AMC Plenary session will be in Arizona in the summer of 2010. For more information, please see [www.azot.gov](http://www.azot.gov).

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## **AOT Activities**

### **Arizona Shines at leading UK Trade Show**

Arizona was well represented recently during World Travel Market (WTM) in London. WTM is the premier global event for the travel industry and the largest travel trade show in the United Kingdom. The event, held November 9-12, showcased vacation destinations from around the world and attracted travel professionals and media from all over the United Kingdom and Ireland. In addition to the AOT staff, the Arizona delegation consisted of the Greater Phoenix Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB), Scottsdale CVB, Tucson CVB, and Southern Arizona Ranches. During the four-day show, appointments were held with approximately 34 tour operators to review their current programs and look at ways to expand their Arizona product and hopefully increase the number of visitors to the Grand Canyon State. For additional information or a copy of the World Travel Market report contact Loretta Belonio at 602-364-3725 or via e-mail at [lbelonio@azot.gov](mailto:lbelonio@azot.gov).

### **Brochure Distribution Opportunities in Germany**

Between January and March 2010, AOT's German representative will attend three leading consumer shows which are being coordinated by the Visit USA Germany committee. There are two five-day shows being held in Munich and Hamburg, and one nine-day show in Stuttgart. It is estimated that more than 375,000 consumers will attend the shows, making this an excellent opportunity to reach a very large target audience.

Brochure participation is normally \$250 per show, but all three shows are available for \$500 (plus shipping). Space is limited to five exhibitors on a first come first served basis! For more information, please contact Loretta Belonio at 602-364-3725 or via e-mail at [lbelonio@azot.gov](mailto:lbelonio@azot.gov).

### **AOT Hosts Two AZAP FAM Tours**

December 1-6, the Trade and Media Relations Division hosted two Arizona Accreditation Program (AZAP) FAM Tours. Jennifer Sutcliffe, Travel Industry Marketing Manager, and Kristy Swanson, Travel Industry Marketing Specialist, escorted two groups of Arizona Certified travel agents around the state. In total 15 travel agents were in attendance and travelled from the following places: California, Canada, Florida, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Mexico, Oregon, and West Virginia. Each FAM started at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport and ended at the Desert Botanical Gardens in Phoenix.

The Central Arizona and Southern FAM visited the communities of Prescott, Chandler, Tucson, Scottsdale and Phoenix. The highlights of the tour were: the Sharlot Hall Museum, Ocotillo Golf Resort, the DeGrazia Gallery, Sabino Canyon, the Arizona Biltmore and downtown Scottsdale.

The Central and Northern Arizona FAM visited the communities Page, Flagstaff, Lake Havasu City, Mesa and Tempe. The highlights of the tour were: Lake Powell, Antelope Canyon, Antelope Point Marina, the Grand Canyon National Park, the Museum of Northern Arizona, Riordan

Mansion State Historic Park, the London Bridge, the Lost Dutchman Museum, Goldfield Ghost Town and Tempe Marketplace. Thank you to all the people and communities that hosted these tours and to all of our sponsors for the Arizona Accreditation Program (AZAP). For more information on these FAM Tours please contact Kristy Swanson at 602-364-3696 or via e-mail at [kswanson@azot.gov](mailto:kswanson@azot.gov).

## Upcoming Events & Activities

### [American Bus Association \(ABA\) Marketplace](#)

**Date:** January 15-19, 2010

**Location:** National Harbor, Maryland

### [Chicago Sales Mission](#)

**Date:** January 18 - 22

**Location:** Chicago, Illinois

### [Visit USA Consumer Shows - Germany](#)

**Date:** January – March 2010

**Location:** Hamburg, Munich, Stuttgart

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## Industry News

### **Grand Canyon Rounds Out Top 10 Most-Searched Vacation Destinations**

THIS YEAR'S most-searched vacation destination on AOL was not Sao Paulo, Bali or some other faraway place. Travelers were most interested in finding out about Disney World and Disneyland. Rounding out the top 10 were Las Vegas; Florida; Hawaii; Mexico; Myrtle Beach, S.C.; Costa Rica; Italy; Colorado; and the Grand Canyon. Desperation and budgets were the driving forces. Beth Caulfield, editor in chief of AOL Travel, attributed Disney's popularity to its aggressive promotion of affordable family packages. Las Vegas earned the No. 2 spot because it's clamoring for visitors in the wake of the economic collapse. (*Page F2, Washington Post, Sun.; Travel Advance, Dec. 7*)

### **Airlines Appear Headed for Recovery**

After a difficult year battling the recession, the airline industry appears to be headed toward a recovery as fuller planes, fewer discounted fares, lower fuel prices and revenue from a variety of formerly free services start to pay off, says The Wall Street Journal. The signs of improvement are most advanced at low-fare carriers that focus on domestic flights. Passenger miles and unit revenue-the money taken for each seat flown one mile-at discount king Southwest Airlines soared 12% last month from a year ago. But other large carriers with high embedded costs and more exposure to troubled international routes also reported improvements as traffic aboard U.S. carriers rebounded more sharply than expected in November.

Risks remain, of course, especially if the economic recovery stalls. The H1N1 flu, if it becomes a bigger problem, could deter travel. And a rebound in the broad economy could spark another run-up in fuel prices, raising airlines' expenses and erasing potential profits. (*Page B2, Wall Street Journal*)

In an era of rampant discounts and fees, airline passengers face a bewildering array of options when they plan air travel for family funerals and end-of-life care. A decade ago, bereavement fares were commonly structured as discounts from the prohibitive "walk-up" fares intended for business travelers with expense accounts. But today every airline seems to have its own way of dealing with family emergencies. Some have done away with bereavement fares altogether, others offer hard-to-compare prices that may prove more expensive than bargain-basement tickets available through online travel agencies like Kayak.com, experts said. Carriers like American Airlines and Delta Air Lines still offer traditional bereavement fares. United and Continental provide flat discounts off any fares found by distressed consumers. Southwest and US Airways don't offer any such deals. ([www.Chicago Tribune.com/Business](http://www.ChicagoTribune.com/Business); *Travel Advance*, Dec. 8)

### **Airlines Seeing a Rebound in Biz Travel...**

The three largest U.S. airlines say they are seeing an uptick in demand for business and premium tickets, which could signal the beginning of a recovery in all-important corporate travel. At Delta Air Lines, chief financial officer Hank Halter said yesterday that the company sold more corporate tickets in November than it did in the same month last year—the first such increase all year. But Delta, the world's largest airline, had to cut prices to get those sales. At American Airlines, officials said both leisure and premium travel were beginning to pick up, especially on international routes. The CFO of United Airlines also said corporate travel was continuing to improve. (AP; [wwwBoston.com](http://www.Boston.com); [www.ChicagoTribune.com/Business](http://www.ChicagoTribune.com/Business); *Travel Advance*, Dec. 10)

...But SWA Says Biz Travel Demand Still Lags

Not everyone in the airline industry sees the glass half-full. "Business travel still lags," said Gary Kelly, chairman and CEO of Southwest Airlines, which carries more U.S. passengers than anyone. "I'm not expecting strong economic growth in 2010, and likewise I'm not expecting a rebound in business travel in 2010. Kelly and other airline executives made their comments at a Next Generation Equity Research conference in New York. ([www.Star-Telegram.com/Business](http://www.Star-Telegram.com/Business); *Travel Advance*, Dec. 10)

### **USTOA Sees Boost for International, Domestic Travel for 2010**

An informal member survey by the U.S. Tour Operators Association, which is holding its annual conference and marketplace in Banff, Canada, this week, found that more than 75 percent of respondents anticipate sales to rise by an average 18 percent in international packaged travel next year. A little more than 56 percent said they foresee average growth of 10 percent in domestic packaged travel. This year's survey results were in sharp contrast to responses from USTOA tour operators at this time last year, when more than 70 percent said they expected sales to either plateau or decline in 2009. ([www.TravelPulse.com](http://www.TravelPulse.com); *Travel Advance*, Dec. 11)

### **International Visits Down 1% in September**

The Commerce Department says that 4.1 million international visitors traveled to the U.S. in September, a decrease of 1 percent compared to September 2008. Total visitation for the first

nine months of 2009 was down 8 percent compared to the same period in 2008. International visitors spent \$10.3 billion during the month, 14 percent less than visitors spent in September 2008. September marked the 11th straight month of decreases in international visitor spending. In the first nine months of 2009, visitors spent \$90.6 billion, down 16 percent from the same period in 2008. In September, Canadian visitation increased 3 percent compared to September 2008. Visitation from Mexico by those traveling to interior destinations totaled 440,000, down 1 percent in September 2009. Overseas visitation decreased 4 percent in September and dropped 9 percent year-to-date. *(Special to TA; Travel Advance, Dec. 11)*

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### **Holiday Calendar of Events**

Want to see some Holiday lights? [Click here](#) to for a list of some great Holiday Lights Shows and Festivals!

### **Calendar of Events**

Visit [www.ArizonaGuide.com](http://www.ArizonaGuide.com) to find information on all the exciting [events, festivals and activities](#) held throughout the Grand Canyon State!

### **Connect with the Arizona Office of Tourism!**

Become a fan on Facebook! <http://www.facebook.com/arizonatravel>

Follow us on Twitter! <http://twitter.com/ArizonaTourism>

**Correction:** In the last issue of AOT in Action, the headlining picture was of a father and daughter sledding at the Arizona Snowbowl. Please note that sledding is prohibited at Arizona Snowbowl. AOT apologizes for any confusion this may have caused.